



## My Dilemma

At first I thought it was an individual issue. Later I decided it was something only writers endured. From there I discovered that artists, singers, and other professionals also suffer. Maybe it's something common to people in other areas of work.

Here's my dilemma. The more I write and the more honest I become, the worse my writing feels. Last week I sent a completed nonfiction manuscript to Summerside/Guideposts to fulfill my contract with them. I felt it was the worst book I had ever written.

*Who wants to read this garbage? This is awful. The publisher will cancel the contract.* Those are a few of the tormenting thoughts.

The book idea came to me months ago after I spoke with the publisher, Jason Rovenstine. I sent him two sample chapters. He liked them.

So did I. Then.

As I continued to write, however, I became increasingly distressed. The doubts knocked softly but I kept typing. The critical voice became more volatile with each page I wrote. I persevered.

I discovered that others suffer from a similar malady. An article about the once-famous singer and movie star Deanna Durbin said she quit singing because of her intimidating insecurity. A friend said the same thing about Barbra Streisand's inhibitions.

Each time I write, I strive to be as transparently honest as I can. That's where the doubts arise. I haven't found a cure, but here's how I understand it. The deeper I go into myself, the more pain I endure. The trouble comes from a natural, self-caring element inside me that wants to protect me from criticism.

I think of it as the palace guards. Their job is to watch over me and not allow me to behave unwisely or stupidly.

So that's the dilemma. The feelings are so powerful I struggle to fight against their insistent racket. At the same time, I sense that if I weren't growing and exposing my deeper self, the palace guards wouldn't be on alert. Sometimes it's easier to give in instead of fighting.

Yesterday I received an email from my publisher, Jason:

*I've read through chapter 7 and love it! It's real and honest and it offers hope. It's just like my friend Cec.*

That doesn't solve my dilemma, but it enforces my commitment to move deeper into myself—no matter how painful.

## Personal News

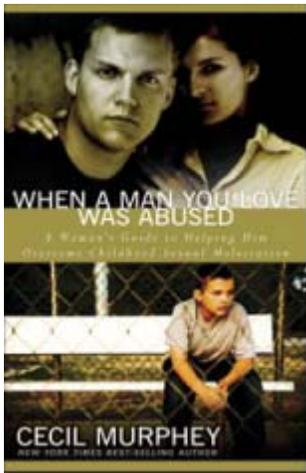
--April 8-9 I'll lead a retreat in the Denver area for the local American Christian Fiction Writers group.

--May 21 I'll drive to Anderson, NC to speak to a local writers group.

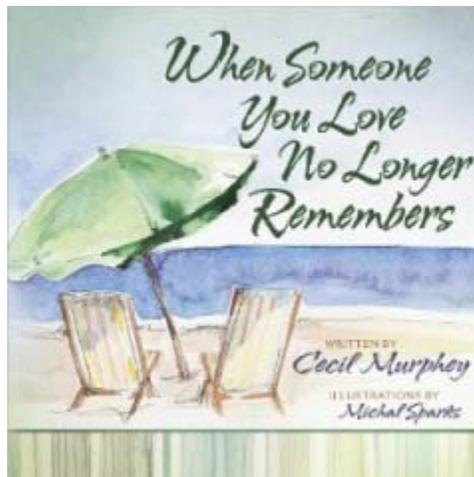
--I'm delighted that Exodus International invited me to speak twice for their conference at Ridgecrest (near Asheville, NC) in June. I'll speak on the topic of male sexual abuse.

--I'll do my first 2011 writers conference at Elizabethtown, KY (near Louisville) June 24-25.

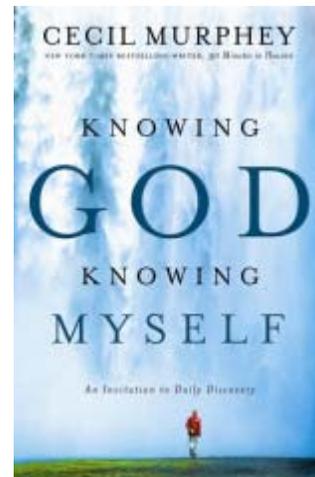
--If you requested a copy of [Knowing God, Knowing Myself](#) and haven't received it, let us know.



*When a Man You Love Was Abused* was nominated for the Foreword Book of the Year Award.



*When Someone You Love No Longer Remembers* will be available July 1 through Harvest House Publishers.



*Knowing God, Knowing Myself* makes a great gift for graduation or Father's Day.

## The Twila Zone—Words from My Assistant, Twila Belk

We recently learned that Cec's book [\*When a Man You Love Was Abused\*](#) has been nominated for the Foreword Book of the Year Award. This is the book that took six years to find a publishing home. It also has gone into its second printing. We're smiling at God's goodness.

[An excerpt \(chapter 2\)](#) from *When a Man You Love Was Abused* is posted at CBN.com.

Cec interviewed with Chris Fabry about his abuse book on March 28. The interview is available by podcast on the [Chris Fabry Live!](#) site. If you know someone who has been abused, they might receive help by listening to the interview.

Graduation season is coming up soon. Consider giving [\*Knowing God, Knowing Myself\*](#) as a gift to your favorite grads. A reviewer used the following words to describe the book: Candid. Authentic. Pure. Inspiring. Quietly challenging.

### Links of Interest

[Cec's website](#)

[Cec's blog for writers](#)

[Cec's blog for male survivors of sexual abuse](#)

[The Cec and Me radio show](#)